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He referred to the policy proposed to be pursued by Government till the completion of the Kodayar works, alluded to in the Dewan's Address, as involving hardship and injustice to other Taluks, and requested Government to re-consider the decision.

Mr. P. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) said that there were no irrigation tanks and chiras in his Taluk, that cultivation depended on springs fed by rain-water, that crops frequently failed and that remissions were not being granted. He requested that an enquiry be made as to whether irrigation tanks had existed before and through whose neglect they ceased to exist, and that orders be given to restore them to their former condition. He further prayed that small low channels adjoining Elais be raised and small dams constructed in a few places so that they might be used to irrigate the Elais.

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the encroachments on the chiras referred to by the member from the Vaikam Taluk, I understand from the Chief Engineer that there are many encroachments like that. We shall enquire into the matter.

In regard to irrigation works, I find that these are now being maintained by Government only in south Travancore and in the Shencottah Taluk. The practice in regard to these Taluks appears to be for the Public Works department to maintain the more important works. We shall continue that practice.

The proposal made by the last speaker that we should now try to work back to the state of affairs that existed probably 50 years ago, and] restore all old tanks and maintain them is, I fear, impracticable. Wherever there are tanks, if they are of sufficient importance and if you bring them to notice, Government will enquire into their condition, and if for a reasonable amount they can be set right, we shall try to restore them. But a large number of small tanks cannot be taken up indiscriminately and money expended on them as suggested.

43. Beds of irrigation tanks, rendered unnecessary by the Kodayar Project, not to be sold.

Mr. S. Ramasubramony Iyer (Member, Agricultural Improvement Association, Nagercoil) said that the agricultural population of south Travancore viewed with great concern the proposal of Government to auction the beds of irrigation tanks reported to have been rendered unnecessary by the Kodayar Project works. The sale of the tank beds was not an uninportant matter but a complex and difficult

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problem. It was too early to judge of the practical success of the Kodayar Project and even if it has proved a success, it has yet to be seen whether it will ensure a never-failing supply of water to meet all demands in all seasons and in times of drought for a year or two. Notwithstanding the existence of rivers and channels, the people of Nanjanad have all along been dependent on their tanks for irrigating their lands. Not infrequently they had heavy down-pours in the country parts without even a drizzle on the hills; and in such cases there would be failure of supply in the Kodayar reservoir itself, and there would be no means of taking advantage of the rains on the plains if the tanks be done away with. He also referred to the necessity of a good water-supply to the cattle of the ryots and to the excellent pasture afforded by the tanks for the cattle to graze on. He said that the money that might be realised by Government would be very small in comparison to the loss and hardship the ryots would be put to, by the sale of the tanks, and requested that a special committee composed of officials and non-officials be appointed to report on the necessity and advisability of auctioning the irrigation tanks, and prayed that Government might consider the question patiently and seriously before passing final orders.

Dewan's reply.—The views of Mr. Ramasubramony Iyer certainly require careful consideration. This is how the matter stands. The Special Revenue officer, now at the Kodayar, has been instructed to take the case of each tank and deal with it separately. Government will not pass any general order either to the effect that all the tanks should be sold in auction, or to the effect that they should all be left alone. The D. P. W. officer and the Special Revenue officer will take the case of each tank and decide whether it is advantageous to maintain it, or whether it may not with advantage be sold. I would advise you and your fellow-ryots of the locality, when the Special Officer goes round, to lay before him all the circumstances you may have in support of your view, and I have no doubt that he will give them due weight and consideration.

44. *Constitution of a separate Irrigation Maramat Agency.*

Mr. M. Kesava Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) urged the constitution of an Irrigation Maramat Agency and the allotment of special funds for the repair and maintenance of irrigation tanks in his Taluk. He attributed the present impoverished condition of the people of his Taluk to frequent failure of crops owing to want of

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